



## **News Release**

For Immediate Release  
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### **Utah Department of Health Sponsoring Free STD Testing**

**(Salt Lake City)** – During the week of September 18-22, 2006, the Utah Department of Health's Sexually Transmitted Disease Control Program will be sponsoring free Gonorrhea and Chlamydia testing at various locations throughout the state.

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), specifically Gonorrhea and Chlamydia, can cause harmful, often irreversible, health complications such as reproductive health problems, fetal and perinatal health problems and cancer. These complications can be avoided if detected early enough, which is why screening is very important.

Since 2001, Utah has seen a 222 percent increase in the number of reported Gonorrhea cases and a 51 percent increase in Chlamydia cases. The incidence rate for Gonorrhea increased to 28.75 cases per 100,000 population in 2005 compared to 8.75 cases per 100,000 population in 2001. The incidence rate for Chlamydia increased to 181.97 cases per 100,000 population in 2005 compared to a rate of 132.62 cases per 100,000 population in 2001.

Since women are biologically more susceptible to become infected with a STD, they suffer more frequently and often develop serious complications as a result of untreated Chlamydia and Gonorrhea than men do. In women, untreated Gonorrhea or Chlamydia infections can spread into the uterus or fallopian tubes and cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). PID can permanently damage the fallopian tubes, uterus and surrounding tissues, leading to infertility, chronic pelvic pain and pregnancy outside the uterus.

Both Chlamydia and Gonorrhea infections can also cause serious complications in an infant if a woman is infected during pregnancy and not diagnosed and treated appropriately. In 2005, 67

percent of all diagnosed Chlamydia cases and 44 percent of diagnosed Gonorrhea cases were females.

All sexually active people should be screened for infection. It's free, fast, and easy!! Call 801-538-6171 or visit [www.health.utah.gov/cdc](http://www.health.utah.gov/cdc) for more information.

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*The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death; assuring access to affordable, quality health care; and promoting healthy lifestyles.*